United Nations S/2002/355

Security Council

Distr.: General
5 April 2002

Original: English

Letter dated 3 April 2002 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 26 March 2002, which I have received from the Deputy Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

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Annex

Letter dated 26 March 2002 from the Deputy Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with United Nations Security Council resolution 1088 (1996), I attach the monthly report on the operations of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) (see enclosure). I would appreciate your making the report available to the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Alessandro Minuto **Rizzo**

Enclosure

Monthly report to the United Nations on the operations of the Stabilization Force

1. Over the reporting period (1 to 28 February 2002) there were just over 17,800 troops deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, with contributions from all the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies and from 15 non-NATO countries.

2. The Stabilization Force (SFOR) continues to contribute to the maintenance of a safe and secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to monitor compliance by the Entity Armed Forces, to conduct inspections and the consolidation of weapons storage sites, to provide support to the international organizations working in theatre, to provide support to the Federation authorities in collecting weapons and ammunition in the framework of Operation HARVEST and to monitor possible terrorist-related threats throughout the country.

3. The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina remained stable during the period under review, although the incidence of inter-ethnic tension and violence continues to be a matter of concern.

4. Incidents reported in February involving inter-ethnic violence included: the shooting of a Bosniac by a Bosnian Croat in Mostar; threats by a crowd of Bosniacs to kill a group of Bosnian Serbs visiting a graveyard near Zenica should they return; the beating of the Sarajevo Mufti and four Muslims by five unidentified youths; a grenade attack carried out by a Montenegrin on an Albanian barracks in the Gorancani refugee camp at Bos Petrovac; the assault of two Bosniac women by Bosnian Serb students at Bratunac high school; and the shooting and severely wounding of a Bosniac by three Croats in Vitez.

5. At the end of February, SFOR conducted a large-scale search for Radovan Karadzic near Celibici, south-east of Foca.[1] Although the operation was unsuccessful, a significant amount of weapons and munitions were found in the area. A second significant find of ammunition, land mines, grenades and mortar rounds was uncovered near Pelagicevo, west of Brcko.

Cooperation and compliance by the Parties

6. The Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina carried out normal training activities during the reporting period in substantial compliance with the military provisions of the Peace Agreement. On 21 February, SFOR representatives met the Vojska Republika Srpska (VRS) Air Force Chief to discuss, inter alia, the intentions of the VRS air force to resume air defence training in the near term, to include anti-aircraft artillery, man-portable surface-to-air missiles, radar and search and rescue (SAR).

7. The Stabilization Force Commander (COMSFOR) has suspended a second Bosniac General suspected of involvement in weapons smuggling activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo. Seven members of the Federation Army and police force, including the two generals, are to appear in court to face charges of arms smuggling.

[1] The Russian Federation confirms its special position on this matter.

8. During the period under review, SFOR troops conducted 71 weapons storage site inspections: 31 Bosnian Serb; 14 Bosniac; 20 Bosnian Croat; and 6 Federation.

9. SFOR troops monitored 276 training and movement activities during the reporting period: 118 Bosnian Serb; 104 Bosniac; 20 Bosnian Croat; and 34 Federation.

10. Eight mine-clearing activities were monitored over this period: 2 Bosnian Serb; and 6 Bosnian Croat.

Cooperation with international organizations

11. Within capabilities and in accordance with its mandate, SFOR continues to provide assistance to the international organizations in theatre, including the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH), the International Police Task Force (IPTF), the Office of the High Representative (OHR), the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

12. SFOR continues to support the follow-up to the OHR's arbitration decision on the Dobrinja suburbs of Sarajevo. The eviction of Bosnian Serb families from the area is continuing. No incidents have been reported.

13. SFOR assisted local police and IPTF following an incident in Multi-National Division (North) when a person armed with an automatic weapon intervened and stopped a court officer from escorting a prisoner from Zenica to Banovici. The assailant and the prisoner both fled but were apprehended later in the day.

14. SFOR provided support for the visit of the Chief Prosecutor of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia to Banja Luka on 15 February when she urged the authorities of the Republika Srpska and the Yugoslav leadership to find and extradite Karadzic and Mladic to The Hague.

15. SFOR representatives held discussions at the civil airports in Mostar, Banja Luka and Sarajevo with a view to making progress on normalizing civil aviation activities throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. On 1 February, SFOR representatives attended the ceremony in Zagreb to mark the had-over of air traffic services in the medium level of airspace of the Sarajevo flight information region (FIR) to the civil authorities.

Outlook

16. The overall security situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is expected to remain stable.